

VOLUME I

CHAPTER 10

PROCESSING AND MAKEUP OF MAIL

1000. PURPOSE This chapter outlines procedures for the processing and makeup of mail at all military postal activities. Mail shall be processed and prepared , for dispatch or delivery as prescribed in DoD 4525.6-H (reference (j)), the Postal Operations Manual (POM) and Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) (reference (i)), and this Manual.

1001. GENERAL

1. The processing and makeup of mail is the first step in the mail delivery cycle. This phase of operation involves collection, postmarking, sorting, pouching, sacking, or traying of mail for dispatch. Incorrect sorting or bagging of mail will result in mail delays. Strict adherence to proper procedures is of utmost importance and will assist in preventing unnecessary mail delays.

2. Reference to MPOS throughout this chapter shall include MAO locations that process mail. All MPOS that process mail shall follow instructions contained in DoD 4525.6-H (reference (j)).

3. To be comparable with USPS delivery standards, MPO locations shall make mail available for pickup 6 days a week. Postal activities tendering mail to or receiving mail from carriers shall operate 7 days a week (when service is available). Commanders may request exceptions to this policy on case-by-case basis from the Director, MPSA. Requests for exemption shall be documented thoroughly and the hours of operations that an MPO will make mail available for pickup or dispatch shall be stated.

1002. PROCESSING OF MAIL

1. Mail Collection

a. Normally, personal mail is collected from collection boxes by MPO personnel, or is hand-delivered across postal finance windows. Mail deposited for mailing at MPOS overseas bearing the return address of persons or activities not authorized MPS privileges shall be processed as outlined in Chapter 9, paragraph 905.2.e. Official mail is collected from unit mail clerks, mail orderlies, or other official mail distribution centers. Collection of unprocessed mail from collection boxes shall be made in accordance with local collection schedules as posted on the boxes. List collection times on USPS Label 55, "Mail Collection Times." Collection times need not reflect the exact minute of collection, but pickup may not be earlier than posted times and should be within 20 minutes of scheduled pickup. Collection times shall coincide with dispatch schedules to prevent unnecessary delay of mail in collection boxes. To ensure comparability with USPS Delivery Standards at least one collection box shall be designated for Sunday and holiday mail . collection to allow dispatch of letter mail 7 days a week when onward dispatch capability is available.

b. In addition to the above information, mail collection boxes shall display the following:

(1) The location of the box used as the last pickup before dispatch. Normally, this box is located within or adjacent to the MPO.

(2) USPS Label 5, "U.S. Mail Decal," centered on right and left side of collection boxes.

c. Official mail found in mail collection boxes shall be turned over to the local official mail control officer for disposition.

d. Postal activities shall provide proper security and accountability for all keys to collection boxes.

e. When collecting mail from mail boxes or unit mail clerks, military postal clerks shall take precautions to safeguard the mail at all times.

2. Postmarking

a. Lobby and collection box notices showing the last collection and dispatch time shall state that mail deposited after the last collection time will not be processed or postmarked until the following duty day. Included shall be a statement for weekend and holiday exceptions. Postmarking and canceling shall be accomplished in accordance with Part 423, POM (reference (i)), with the following exceptions:

(1) The date of mailing shall be included on all postmarking devices.

(2) The a.m. or p.m. may not be used in any postmarking devices.

(3) Mail deposited after the last scheduled collection will not be postmarked until the following duty day.

(4) Bulk mailers, such as AAFES warehouses, that dispatch mail on predetermined-days shall postmark the mail on the actual date of-dispatch. For example, if a shipment is being prepared on Tuesday but the actual dispatch is not scheduled until Friday, the postmark shall reflect Friday's date.

b. Mail posted at MAOS for direct dispatch to CONUS or other MPOs or MAOS shall bear the postmark number of the dispatching MAO. Unprocessed mail that is forwarded from an MAO to a parent MPO for processing shall be postmarked with the number of the parent MPO.

c. Requests for philatelic postmarks shall be honored except when precluded for security reasons (see part 244, POM, reference (i)).

d. Missent mail shall be postmarked on the back to indicate date of receipt before "being redispached to the end destination.

e. Domestic mail discovered with insufficient postage shall be processed as outlined in Section 146.13, DMM (reference (i)). Mail bearing

an international address without postage or insufficient postage shall be returned to sender. (See IMM, Part 420, (Reference (i))).

3. Sorting Mail Sorting of outgoing mail shall be in accordance with DoD 4525.6-H (reference (j)). The design of sorting cases shall be determined by the volume of mail generated by the postal activity or MACOM directives.

4. Securing Direct Letter or Flag Bundles To ensure letters and flats remain intact and maintain their ZIP identity during transportation, they shall be tied out properly before pouching or sacking. The steps outlined below will assist clerks in preparing letter and flat bundles correctly.

a. Bundles shall be made as large as one hand can hold easily--approximately 4 inches thick.

b. All bundles shall be faced with a letter (preferably typewritten) that clearly identifies the organization, unit, firm, city, state, or ZIP code that mail is to be dispatched to.

c. Secure all letter bundles with rubber bands (USPS item 0385E).

d. Flats and magazines shall be secured with twine (PS Item 1153), if rubber bands are too small.

5. Securing Working Bundles Containing Certified, Special Delivery, and Balloting Material Certified, special delivery, letters, and balloting materials shall be placed on top of working letter bundles. This mail may never be placed in firm or unit direct letter bundles. Certified and special delivery parcels shall be handled in accordance with the instructions contained in Part 455, POM (reference (i)), if practical. If a bundle contains both certified and special delivery, the special delivery mail shall be placed on top. If a letter bundle contains certified, special delivery, and balloting material, special delivery mail shall be placed on top of the bundle followed by balloting materials and certified mail.

1003. MAREUP OF MAIL

1. Pouching, Sacking, and Traying Procedures The first step of actual dispatch of mail is correct pouching or traying. All mail shall be pouches and sacked or trayed by classification and service, considering priorities, transportation policies, and cost. MPOS dispatching mail shall follow the guidelines established by the DoD 4525.6-H (reference (j)), POM and DMM (reference (i)) regarding proper traying, pouching, and sacking of mail. All MPOS shall use the following general guidelines when pouching or sacking mail.

a. Zone-rated (priority) mail shall be dispatched in orange air priority parcel (APP) pouch and first-class letter mail in orange air number 1 or 2 pouch.

b. Dispatching agencies may not commingle first-class mail or priority mail with other classes of mail without prior approval of the MPSA.

c. All film mailers not being sent to commercial processing laboratories and voice tape cassettes shall be pouched separately from the other mail. When volume does not warrant separate pouching, voice tape cassettes and film self-mailers labeled "Mixed States Working" shall be forwarded to the serving AMT, MPO, or FMC for consolidation, when appropriate. MPOS that do not mass on a terminal may consolidate in the same pouch with other first-class mail.

d. Items that could damage mailbags or other mail may not be pouched or sacked but shall be dispatched as OSPS unless MACOMS direct otherwise. Parcels that meet the criteria outlined in Section 128.6, DMM (reference (i)), may not be sacked or pouched, except for those locations that cannot receive OSPS (see Exhibit 125.2, DMM, reference (i)).

e. Letter mail being returned to sender shall be dispatched with other letter mail.

f. Priority parcels and SAM or PAL parcels being returned to sender shall be dispatched as SAM.

g. Publications marked "Returned Postage Guaranteed," third-class mail of obvious value, and fourth-class parcels returned to sender shall be dispatched as SAM.

h. Mail being dispatched under cover routing procedures (see Chapter 11, Part 3, paragraph 1117.1.) shall be double-bagged and slide-labeled to the serving MPS activity. No outside mail may be dispatched under cover routing.

2. Affixing Tags and Labels to Pouches and Sacks After all mail has been properly placed in sacks or pouches, the next step is to label and tag pouches and sacks properly. Since slide labels and tags are the only external identifiers of end destinations for mail contained in the pouch or sack, extreme care shall be taken to label all mail correctly before manifesting. The instructions for the proper methods of labeling and tagging pouches or sacks for dispatch are contained in the DoD 4526.5-H (reference (j)).

3. Mailbag Equipment and Handling Procedures

a. Sensitive Mail Because of their sensitive nature, official intelligence pouches, direct pouches (DP), CASREP pouches, Weapons System Pouches (WPSs), and Joint Uniform Military Pay System (JUMPS) pouches may not be consolidated with other mail matter, but shall be kept intact at all times. Handling procedures for official intelligence pouches, DPs, CASREP pouches, and WSPS are issued by the DoD Components concerned.

b. USPS Mailbags Pouches and sacks are furnished by the USPS for exclusive use in transporting U.S. mail; therefore, they may not be used for any other purpose.

(1) Empty mailbags shall be examined carefully after each use to determine "that no mail is left therein and that slide labels have been removed. The mouth of the bag shall be held wide open in good light and the whole interior shall be examined closely. Mailbags may not be turned inside out.

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(2) Surplus bags shall be returned frequently to mailbag depositories in accordance with the instructions contained in Chapter 11, Part 2, paragraph 1110.3. Before returning empty mail equipment, serving AMTs military mailbag depositories, MCAS, and MPOS shall coordinate with one another for intratheater use of mailbags.

(3) The gross weight of mail equipment shall be inscribed in kilograms (see Chapter 11, Table 11-3) on SlideLabels and/or Flight Tags of all mail bags being transported by air. Weight need not be entered on slide labels when mailbags are bulk weighed in a container and are not labeled beyond the CONUS gateway.

c. Diplomatic Pouch Service Diplomatic pouches entered into the military postal system by activities of the Department of State under their "Postage and Fees Paid" indicia may not be opened under any circumstance while in postal channels. The use of the USPS mailbag equipment flagged as diplomatic pouches is prohibited.

d. JUMPS Pouches

(1) Military finance centers have a specially designed airmail pouch for mailing all JUMPS checks and leave and earnings statements to finance and accounting offices, disbursing offices, and other designated activities. The pouch is the same basic orange color as the number one nylon airmail pouch. The JUMPS pouch markings distinguish it from a normal airmail pouch. JUMPS pouches have markings of black blocks at the top and bottom, widely spaced lateral black stripes, and the letters "JUMPS" in bold black letters on two sides. The military finance centers are the only organizations authorized to use these pouches. JUMPS pouches may not be opened in transit, consolidated with other pouches, or used for any other purpose. "

(2) When JUMPS mail is received at a military postal activity, it shall be made available for immediate receipt by the addressee shown on the slide label. If a pouch is received with a slide label missing, it shall be delivered immediately, unopened, to the local finance and accounting officer or disbursing officer.

1004. DISPATCH OF MAIL UNDER SPECIAL RULES

1. Hazardous Material Hazardous materials may be mailed when they meet criteria established by USPS (see USPS Publication 52, reference (i)). Hazardous Materials shall be made up, marked, or tagged in accordance with the instructions contained in Section 124.2, DMM (reference (i)). If all conditions of the DMM are met, hazardous material shall be dispatched separately from ordinary mail, when possible.

1005. MILITARY POST OFFICE IRREGULARITIES

1. Reporting Errors

a. Errors in makeup and dispatch of mail shall be reported on DD Form 2273, "Irregularities in Makeup and Dispatch of Mail." USPS errors noted on DD Form 2273 shall be reported to the appropriate JMPA. DD Forms 2273 that report irregularities between MPOs shall be sent to the appropriate

postal commander or postal officer. Errors that are of a recurring nature shall be reported by separate correspondence to the MPSA for resolution. Major Commands at their option may be included in distribution.

b. When MPOS report errors on DD Form 2273, slide labels and facing slips shall be attached to the report. These labels and slips assist in isolating errors and speeding corrective action. A concise explanation of the irregularity shall be shown in the remarks sections of the DD Form 2273.

2. Missent Mail When a noted irregularity involves missent mail, the following actions shall be taken:

a. Postmark all missent letters and flats on the back. Parcels and publications shall be postmarked on the address side.

b. Postmark all missent pouches on the Slide Label/Flight Tag before dispatch.

c. Properly make up mail and redispach to its correct destination.

3. Excessive Transit Time Complaints The MPS and USPS are concerned with finding and eliminating the cause of mail delays. To provide a systematic standard approach in solving mail delay problems, the TTISMM was developed. The data collected is used to develop mail delivery standards and to compare actual performance with those standards. Information outlined below is essential to eliminate transit time complaints.

a. When a complaint is received concerning excessive transit times, the cooperation of the customer making the complaint shall be obtained. Inform the customer of normal delivery standards and goals established by the TTISMM and explain any unusual factors that may have effected mail delivery for that period, such as weather or strikes.

b. If the customer desires to file a mail delay complaint, the following actions shall be taken:

(1) The post office of origin and actual mailing date of the article shall be established. To obtain this information, the customer making the complaint shall be requested to provide the MPO with the wrapper annotated with the date of receipt.

(2) If a wrapper is not available, attempt to obtain the postmark date, date of receipt, and mailing office.

(3) A single delayed mailing does not necessarily warrant investigation; thus, the activity receiving the complaint shall collect a representative sampling of data that will support a mail delay. For this purpose, pouch slide labels and postmarks of mail contained in those pouches shall be used to support transit information.

4. Slide Label Application Slide labels utilized by MPO dispatching activities shall be back-stamped to show the date of dispatch.